



## California National Guard Counterdrug Task Force

# The Informer

## Message from HQ

COL Richard M. H. Loesch  
CDTF Commander



First Quarter 2005  
California National Guard  
Counterdrug Task Force

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Counterdrug Headquarters  
Sacramento, CA

### Public Affairs Note:

For reasons of operational security, the last names of most CDTF members are not published.

As we close out this first quarter (Calendar Year), I am relieved to be sitting in my office writing these comments instead of boarding a plane to fly off to another meeting or conference. Much has happened during this quarter that will impact our task force. I will give you a by month rendition. First however, I would be remiss if I did not ask for your good thoughts and prayers for MSgt Doug Ellis and his family. MSgt Ellis succumbed after a long struggle to terminal cancer on 29 March. He was a much respected flight engineer with TCO and will be missed. Additionally, I am sad to report, one of our TFE Soldiers suffered a stroke that will require substantial recovery time. Again, please hold these people and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

During January we co-sponsored with the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE) the annual Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP) Training Seminar in South Lake Tahoe. This was a record eradication year for CAMP and our supporting efforts were very much appreciated and recognized. TCO, TEA, TFO, THA, TWO were all participants in CAMP and are credited with being major contributors to CAMP's success.

I visited the Joint Language Training Center in Ogden, UT with TPH on 18 Jan. We were able to get briefed up on the highly successful translation missions they are involved in and we soon will be. Then it was off to FL for a CD Advisory Council (CDAC) work session to fine tune our national CD strategic plan. CMSgt Alsobrook and I attended the afternoon session of DDR's stand down on 24 Jan. I finished up the month by taking COL Ashworth, the Senior Army Advisor to CA ARNG, on a tour of the border. He visited with TFE and TSH. He was very impressed with CD's efforts as well as the Soldiers and Airmen he met, my thanks to both teams.

In February we held our LEA Conference once again in Napa. We saw many new faces among our regulars. All in all we had a successful conference. CMSgt

Alsobrook and I paid a visit to TWO on the 15<sup>th</sup>. I attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (Fiscal Year) CDAC Conference in FL - 22 through 24 February - where we presented our CD concerns to the newly formed Domestic Operations Advisory Board (DOAB) to LTG Blum (CNGB). As you may remember from past Commander's Comments, this board consists of six general officers (usually Adjutants General or Assistant AGs) coming from their respective states to present CD and now Homeland Defense issues to CNGB. Following that the XO, CMSgt Alsobrook and I attended the ARNG Training Management Workshop in San Jose - 25 through 27 February - where we learned about CAARNG's transition from traditional force structure to Units of Employment (UE)/Units of Action (UA). A UE is an expanded Division HQs while a UA is a deployable Brigade Centric organization that is resourced from the Deputy Adjutant General, Army through the UE. UAs report directly to TAG. I ended the month and began March attending the RAID Conference. Effective 1 October 2005 TEA will transition from a TDA CD unit to a MTOE line company of the newly forming Security and Support Bn (S&S Bn). CDTF will no longer own the OH-58 aircraft. Further, the personnel impact on TEA is still unclear until we get a final MTOE for the S&S Bn and learn what their AGR and Technician requirements will be for the company. I, the J-3, and TEA Cdr will work with the S&S Bn Cdr and SAAO to affect as smooth a transition as we can for all concerned.

**See "Message" on Page 2**

## **“Message” Cont.:**

Our intent is to continue to maintain and improve TEA's level of support to LEAs throughout this transition. The good news is, with this transition we will have access to eight aircraft as opposed to six.

The CDC Conference convened on 14 March and ran through the 18<sup>th</sup>. We received our funding target for FY 06 which is roughly the same as last year without the Congressional plus up. Because this is a target figure we can not say for sure just what we will receive for FY 06. However, the target funding figure is sufficient for planning purposes. As I see it with the plus up we should be able to field a force at about the strength level we currently are at, i.e. 300+ or - personnel.

Currently the HQs staff is involved in what we term an “Adjust Fire”. They are looking at the entire program to determine how we need to look to be the most efficient for the support missions we undertake. This will require a reshuffling of our force structure. More will follow as we develop a better picture. I am particularly heartened by the successful Staff Assistance Visits (SAVs) conducted by our HQs

staff to all teams. All of us learned much and worked through many issues to make this SAV a win-win for all. This will be a bi-annual process. I extend my sincere thanks to all of you for your cooperation, willingness to solve problems, and candor.

Of note are our efforts to bring back our REFRADing Soldiers and Airmen. Team Cdrs have identified the positions that are available to the J-1. The J-1 will manage all returning Soldiers and Airmen to ensure their packets are complete before bringing them back on CD orders. Should no position exist for a returning Soldier or Airman due to mission transition or funding, the J-1 will look to place the Soldier or Airman in other available positions in the Cal Guard. There is no shortage of AGR, ADSW, and SAD positions. Our higher HQs is assisting us with placement. Our goal is to place all returning CD Soldiers and Airmen who wish to return to full time employment in the Cal Guard in a full time position even if it may be outside the program.

We are tasked by Senior Leadership to come up with a plan to mitigate our Guard wide problem of vehicle accidents. CW5 Lineberry has developed one that re-

quires the completion of a risk assessment before taking a GSA, rental car, or POV on TDY as well as leave requiring traveling outside the immediate Home of Record/ Team Assignment area. I will send out more definitive guidance on this in the near future. I ask for everyone's cooperation on this as we must find a way to reduce our vehicle accidents. This risk assessment will make you aware of the potential safety threats you will need to mitigate for a particular trip. Awareness allows for alertness and corrective measures.

April starts the FY 05 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. We will convene the FY 05 Horizon I Conference here in Sacramento 25 through 27 April. This is my opportunity to put forth my FY 06 Yearly Guidance. I look forward to meeting with the Team Cdrs and NCOICs.

In closing let me reiterate how fortunate I am to be part of this outstanding organization. I remain very proud of your efforts in this war we are fighting against drugs. Please keep our deployed Soldiers, Airmen, and their families in your daily thoughts and prayers. CARRY ON!

## **A Fallen Comrade**

MSgt Doug Ellis, 50, a C-130 Flight Engineer, died March 29, 2005, after a long battle with cancer at his home of record in Camarillo, California.

MSgt Ellis began his military career in the United States Air Force in 1973. After serving four years on active duty he joined the California Air National Guard. In 1980, he became a Flight Engineer with the 115<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron acquiring over 6,200 flight hours. He was last assigned to the 146<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, Channel Islands Air National Guard Station, CA.

The CDTF was honored to have him serve on TCO for nearly seven years. He is sadly missed and will never be forgotten. Our thoughts and prayers remain with his family and friends.





# Message from the Senior Enlisted Advisor

By CMSgt Jim Alsobrook

We made it through the OSD budget crisis last month with the Counterdrug program in tact, thanks to the Army National Guard covering our 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget shortfall. We have since begun to take a look at our program, our missions and how we accomplish them. Without some budget increases from Congress, the California Counterdrug program will have a funded end strength of

less than 300 personnel for Fiscal Year 06. What does this mean to the individual Soldier and Airman? We currently have about 300 personnel on Counterdrug orders, with about 140 Soldiers and Airmen deployed. So far we have been able to re-employ or find employment elsewhere with in the California National Guard for all our REFRADING Soldiers and Airmen. With assistance from the 49th CSC, we hope to be able to offer employment with in the California National Guard to all our REFRADING Soldiers and Airmen.

The California Counterdrug Program will definitely need to undergo some restructuring if we are to remain relevant in the War on Illegal Drugs. In today's political climate, a DoD funded program that cannot demonstrate its relevancy won't be around for very long. Within Counterdrug some missions may be scaled back, while others may grow depending on the State Plan requirements, LEA requests and the mission's specific "bang for the buck" value that it brings to the table. The Counterdrug Task Force Commander's directive to all Team Commanders is that they are to develop and retain the best qualified folks to accomplish their team's respective mission. With this in mind, the enlisted force must remain flexible, maintain the highest level of military conduct and standards, and give one hundred percent effort to our respective missions. Through our combined efforts we will reshape the Task Force to provide outstanding support to our LEA customers, while at the same time, to the fullest extent possible, minimizing the impact of budget reductions and reshaping on our Soldiers and Airmen.

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## Did You Know?

In December 2004, Bank of America reported the loss of five data tapes that contained personal information of 1.1 million DoD Travel Card holders. That personal information included the account holders' name, billing address, social security number, date of birth, and phone numbers. Bank of America has been sending notification letters to cardholders, informing them of this loss. In order to determine if your information was included in the lost data, you are encouraged to contact Bank of America at a special toll free number (1-800-493-8444).

Here's some helpful information to assist you in protecting yourself against identity theft:

1. The next time you order checks have only your initials (instead of first name) and last name put on them. If someone takes your checkbook, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank will know how you sign your checks.
2. Do not sign the back of your credit cards. Instead, put "PHOTO ID REQUIRED."

3. When you are writing checks to pay on your credit card accounts, DO NOT put the complete account number on the "For" line. Instead, just put the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number, and anyone who might be handling your check as it passes through all the check processing channels won't have access to it.
4. Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place.

Just in case your wallet is someday missing here's critical information to limit the damage:

1. Cancel your credit cards immediately. The key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them.

2. File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where your credit cards, etc., were stolen. This proves to credit providers you were diligent, and this is a first step toward an investigation (if there ever is one).
3. Call the 3 national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen, and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit. It's also a good idea to contact the Social Security Administration fraud line as well.

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271



# SAFETY CORNER:



**CW5 Roy L.  
CDTF Safety**

Good News, the Safety Team is reconstituted with all personnel back from deployment at this writing. Our intent is get on the road to assist you in your efforts to maintain a Safe and Healthy work and play environment for your personnel and their families during your on and off duty activities.

We were very remiss in our obligation to the Commander/ CDC per our CA-CDTF 385-10 (Safety SOP) last year due to the GWOT.

Some semi-annual reminders for work place and home safety: The Spring time change means; 1. Change smoke, CO2, and all battery operated safety warning systems in your home and office. 2. Practice your home emergency action plan. Do you remember, what are the egress and rally point procedures in the event of home fire, intruder, earth quake, etc?

In the work place, these emergency action plans should be tested and documented quarterly.

Accident reporting:

The last quarter indicated some deficiencies in this area. Here is how it works according to our CA-CDTF 385-10 (Safety SOP).

Reportable accident or incident occurs: refer to paragraph 1-10 of your CA-CDTF 385-10 for the definitions of reportable accident or incident. You then follow the procedures delineated in chapter 1-10. The only real change is Figure 1-3, pg 19. Now the SIR/ IR is sent directly to the Safety Office at the AAFOB, NASNI, Coronado, NOT TO THE: CDC, J-3, J-4. The Safety Officer now screens, files, forwards, and does distribution on the SIRs. The best method of sending the SIR/ IR is via e-mail. If this is a challenge, let us know and we can fix it.

The other big recurring issue in accident reporting is notifying the Safety Officer of the accidents. This needs to be done within the same period you notify your individual chain of command. As stated in the CA-CDTF 385-10 (Safety SOP), the members of the Safety and Health Team will respond to selected accidents. Also, some accidents will trigger a sequence of requirements mandated by Department of Defense (DoD) that the Safety and Health Team must activate. During annual doctrinal training, these points will be reemphasized.

We are developing a very aggressive risk management program that will address GSA/ POV/ Rental

vehicle travel during TDY, PCS, and Leave status. All of you who have recently been to a military school, title 10 status, or who are paying attention to any of the safety messages from DOD, Air Force, or Army Safety Offices know what I am talking about. We will be staffing this policy in the month of April to get it out to all teams.

FY 2005 statistics: The CA-CDTF has experienced 42 accidents. We have lost 114 man-days due to on and off duty injuries. We have sustained 302 restricted man-days due to on and off duty injuries. Current estimated dollar loss due to accidents is \$16,800.

Safety is everybody's business. Safety is following standards and procedures. Safety is reviewing the standard, performing to standard, and holding people to the standard. Safety is defined as *"Free from Recognized Hazards."* You stay free from recognized hazards by doing your on and off duty tasks *"By the Book."* If you do not know the standard, look it up, ask for training, *"Pull the Red Handle."* As I read our SIRs/ IRs and accidents on a daily basis, I really do not see any non-preventable accidents. If we would just take a little more time to assess and manage risks, we can stop the accident trends.

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## DoD Announces Criteria for Two New Campaign Medals

According to Military.com

The Department of Defense announced the creation of two campaign medals for Afghanistan and Iraq to recognize members who made specific sacrifices and significant contributions in these areas of operation.

Servicemembers authorized the Afghanistan Campaign Medal must have served in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom on or after Oct. 24, 2001. Those authorized the Iraq Campaign Medal must have served in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom on or after March 19, 2003.

For more information, including eligibility requirements, go to

<http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/2005/nr20050407-2441.html>

To see an image of the new campaign medals, go to <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Apr2005/d20050407MedalPic.pdf>

# Tattoos & Branding in the Military

By MSG Debra P.  
CDTF EO Advisor

In 1909, the United States government forbade the enlistment of men with “indecent or obscene tattooing” into the Navy. At the time, about 90% of the US Navy’s sailors were already tattooed. During the rapid recruitment and reenlistment of sailors during the 1940’s, tattoo parlors around the U.S., were doing a brisk business altering existing tattoos to make them acceptable to the straight laced authorities. Although today’s tattoos are more popular and accepted than ever before, the military is again tightening and enforcing these policies.

Both the Army and the Air Force policies (per AR 600-20, AR 670-1, and AFI 36-2903) prohibit any tattoos and/or branding anywhere on the body that are obscene, advocate sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination or advocate unlawful violence.

Tattoos or brands that are visible in a Class A uniform are prohibited. However, pre-existing small, inconspicuous, or inoffensive tattoos or brands on areas of the body, other than the face, neck, or

head (i.e. ankle or hand) are not prohibited for current service-members if it does not detract from an appropriate military image.

The following tattoos or brands are in direct violation of Army and Air Force policy and must be removed, regardless of their location on the body. Tattoos that are:

(1) Racist or reflect association with extremist organizations that advocate discrimination based on race, color, gender, ethnicity, religion or national origin or advocate unlawful violence (“KKK”, swastika, etc.).

(2) Indecent, which is defined as grossly offensive to modesty, decency, or propriety; shock the moral sense because of their vulgar, filthy, or disgusting nature; tend to incite lustful thought; or tend reasonable to corrupt morals or incite libidinous thoughts.

(3) Sexist, or degrades or demeans a person based on gender.

Very large tattoos or brands, such as one covering a majority of one or

more limbs may also violate the policy, regardless of the theme.

Remember, a soldier or airmen may be administratively discharged for failing to remove a tattoo that the commander finds prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Servicemembers are advised to seek medical advice about the process of removing tattoos and associated risks. Tattoo removal frequently requires five to eight treatment sessions with a dermatologist or plastic surgeon, with six to eight weeks between sessions. Tattoos or brands can also be modified, at your own expense, to conceal its offensive nature.

Neither the Army, nor the Air Force policies “grandfather” tattoos or brands. Tattoos and brands are either acceptable or not. If they are not acceptable, then they should be considered for removal. Service-members need to be aware that the tattoos or brands they get can have long-term effects on their future opportunities within the military.

## LEADERS’ RESPONSIBILITIES IN ENFORCING THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE TATTOO POLICY

- Identify inappropriate tattoos/brands
- Determine if there is behavior associated with the offending tattoo/brand
- Counsel service-member with offending tattoo/brand
- Make the appropriate judgment call about a tattoo/brand in cases not specifically covered by policy
- In difficult cases, not clearly covered by the policy, or when there is a question of enforcement, a commander’s decision may be reviewed by the special court martial convening authority after consultation with the JAG
- When in doubt, consult the Command Judge Advocate for clarification and guidance at (916) 854-3817

MSG Debra P.  
Equal Opportunity Advisor  
Commercial: (619) 545-0101  
DSN: 735-0101

### DOD Sexual Assault Hotline:

The DoD announced a toll-free number which has been established for people who want to contact or provide information to the DoD Task Force on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault.

**(800) 497-6261**

# Helpful Information for California National Guard Members:

Combat Stress Control Program  
CombatStressControl@ca.ngb.army.mil  
[www.calguard.ca.gov/csc](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/csc)

Employer Support of the Guard and  
Reserve (ESGR) California contact  
1-916-854-3106  
Jerold.jurin@ca.ngb.army.mil  
9800 Goethe, Box 37, Sacramento, CA 95827-3563

Operation Ready Families  
800-449-9662  
916-854-3252  
DSN: 466-3252  
<http://www.calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies>  
9800 Goethe, Box 269101, Sacramento, CA 95826-9101

California National Guard – Chaplain  
24 hour pager:  
1-888-939-1754 (leave number) 916-854-3398  
<http://www.calguard.ca.gov/chaplain>  
9800 Goethe, Box 269101, Sacramento, CA 95827

Air Force Pay – Contact unit first  
1-800-346-3374  
<http://www.dfas.mil/money/milpay>  
email: CCL-AIRFORCE@DFAS.MIL

Air Force OneSource  
1-800-707-5784  
[www.airforceonesource.com](http://www.airforceonesource.com)  
Login: airforce Password: ready

Army OneSource  
1-800-464-8107  
[www.armyonesource.com](http://www.armyonesource.com)  
Login: army Password: ouesource

TRIWEST  
(our Regional call center for services)  
1-888-874-9378  
[triwest.com](http://triwest.com)  
TRICARE Claims, P.O. Box 77028, Madison, WI 93707

Defense Enrollment Eligibility Recording System (DEERS)  
1-800-538-9552  
<http://tricare.osd.mil/deers>  
DEERS Support, 400 Gigling Road, Seaside, CA 93955

California Vet Centers  
State locator toll free: 1-866-747-VETS  
<http://www.va.gov/rccs>

Department of Veterans Affairs  
VA Benefits: 1-800-827-1000  
Health Benefits: 1-877-222-8387  
<http://www.va.gov/>  
Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland  
Region addresses: 1-800-827-1000

Army Pay-Contact unit first  
1-877-276-4729  
web: <http://www.dfas.mil/money/milpay/>  
email: arng.milpay@arng-fsc.ngb.army.mil

**For updates to this information: [CombatStressControl@ca.ngb.army.mil](mailto:CombatStressControl@ca.ngb.army.mil)**

## ***Federal Law Postpones Certain Civil Obligations***

According to Military.com

What happens if you are on Active Duty, or you're a Reservist/Guard member called to Active Duty, but you still have matters to attend to back home? What if you're overseas and can't make your credit card or mortgage payments? What if you have issues outstanding in a civil court?

The Servicemember's Civil Relief Act (SCRA), which expands upon the former Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act (SSCRA), provides a wide range of protections for individuals entering, called to active duty in the military, or deployed servicemembers. It is intended to postpone or suspend certain civil obligations to enable service members to devote full attention to duty and relieve stress on the family members of those deployed servicemembers.

To learn more, visit the SCRA Index at  
<http://www.military.com/ResourcesAlmanac/ResourcesKeyIndex/0,14015,47,00.html>

To read a related article, go to  
[http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,usaf3\\_033005.00.html](http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,usaf3_033005.00.html)